

4256 ce. 13.

The Music and Odours of Saints.

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED

At PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, Sept. 2, 1787.

BY

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD-STREET;

AT MONKWELL-STREET CHAPEL, IN THE CITY;

AND AT RICHMOND, IN SURREY.

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. Rev. v. 8.

L O N D O N :

Sold by G. Terry, Paternoster-row; J. Chalmers, No 210, Whitecross-street, near Moorfields; J. Davidson, No 7, Postern-row, Tower-hill; Mr. Baker, No 226, Oxford-street; Mrs. Howes, No 15, Charles-street, Wells-street; at Monkwell-street Chapel every Tuesday evening; at Providence Chapel, Titchfield-street; by Mr. Mantle, Lewes, Sussex; Mr. Fenley, Broad Mead, Bristol; and by Mr. Chalmers, Cambden-alley, Portsmouth Common.

MDCCLXXXVIII.

The British Museum

M O M A S

ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE SECRETARY

OF THE MUSEUM



1851

LONDON

Printed by...

A

S E R M O N,

From REV. v. 8.

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

THIS chapter begins thus, *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals.* The glorious person here represented on the throne is, in my humble opinion, God the Father. The throne is not the throne of judgment; for although he has *prepared his throne for judgment*, Psalm ix. 7. yet he is not seated upon that as yet, for the judgment day is not arrived; besides, the throne of judgment is given up to our blessed Immanuel; *for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, John v. 22. Nor is a throne of grace here intended; for Christ himself is the throne of grace:

A 2

grace

grace is poured into his lips, and God hath blessed him for ever, Psalm xlv. 2. It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, Col. i. 19. that we might receive out of his fulness grace for grace, John i. 16. God has treasured up all grace in him, and no where else, for there is salvation in no other name.

In the ark of Christ's body is every spiritual blessing deposited, as the hidden manna was laid up in the ark of the covenant; he is our sanctuary, our glorious throne, and our propitiation. As the law, and the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, were laid up in the ark under the mercies seat, so in Christ is the magnified law laid up—*thy law is within my heart.* Aaron's blooming rod, which prefigured the church in gospel times, which is called a *royal priesthood*, 1 Peter ii. 9. and the *rod of an almond tree*, Jer. i. 11. together with the golden pot of manna, which prefigured the comfortable grace of life, are all in their spiritual signification to be found and enjoyed in Christ Jesus. The ark of the testament is now opened in heaven; and to *him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone*, Rev. ii. 17. which is the witness of God's spirit.

Thus the ark, with all its mysterious treasures, is now to be found in heaven; and blessed be God it is opened in the church, and poor sinners are led to see that the ark with all its contents, and the mercies seat thereon, prefigured the
Lord

Lord Jesus Christ, who is our throne of grace, our propitiation, and our only mercies seat. It was on him that the sentence of the law was executed; it was of him that Justice got an infinite satisfaction; *justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face*, Psalm lxxxix. 14.

The Saviour, as a throne of grace, was shewed in an obscure manner by the prophet Isaiah, where he is represented under the name Eliakim: *It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiab, and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a FATHER to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a GLORIOUS THRONE to his father's house*, Isa. xxii. 21—24. In the above text you have Christ represented as the everlasting father of his people; he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; secondly, as a glorious throne to the household of faith; thirdly, as a nail fastened in a sure place, that every vessel of mercy may hang their hopes and expectations on him for time and eternity; and fourthly, you have him held forth as a sovereign, having the keys of David; which are now found, not in the hand of Eliakim, but in the hand of Christ—*Write these things saith he*

[Christ] *that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth*, Rev. iii. 7. Thus it appears, that not a throne of judgment, nor a throne of grace is intended here, but rather a throne of glory, upon which God the Father sat.

Of the book that he had in his right hand, which is said to be written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals, I shall treat from the words of my text, where the Saviour is said to take the book.

In the second verse, *a strong angel with a loud voice is making proclamation—Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof*. Whosoever he be that can take this book had need of infinite wisdom to open the seals and disclose the divine mysteries; he had need be a friend to sinners, to dispense the blessings of it to them; he had need of an omnipotent power, to execute the vengeance it contains; for he that opens it must reward the just, judge the wicked, and destroy the world; and he had need of omniscience, to search the hearts and try the reins of men, to know how and where to apply them. For this wonderful book contains all things that shall come to pass in the world and church, till the *mystery of God be finished, and time be no more*.

And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon, verse 3. No man in heaven (not Christ himself

himself if he is no more than man), neither the spirits of just men made perfect, nor any of the saints in a militant state, was able to open the book;—*nor no man on earth*; either saint or sinner, wise or unwise, noble or ignoble, learned or illiterate;—*neither was any under the earth*—either damned souls, or damned devils, able to open this book, loose its seals, or look into its contents.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon, verse 4. John saw the need of a mediator, a prophet, and an advocate; one to undertake as a mediator, make known the mysteries as a prophet, and plead the cause of the just as an advocate; and he saw no man in heaven, earth, or hell, that was worthy of either of these offices, or able for such an undertaking. He must be equal to God that does it, or he cannot transact with God for us; and he must be man also, or he cannot undertake for man. In short, he must be *God's equal*, and *man's fellow*, that takes the book. Christ can do it, for *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6. therefore he can transact with God; and as he is *man's fellow*, he can transact for man, and sympathise with him, especially as he is *anointed with the oil of gladness above all his fellows*, Ps. xlv. 7. who were to have *fellowship with him*, 1 John i. 3. by being *joined to him*, and made of *one spirit with him*, 1 Cor. vi. 17.

And one of the elders said unto me, weep not: behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof, verse 5. Here you have the terrible and powerful majesty of the Saviour set forth by a lion, called the *lion of the tribe of Judah*, because 'tis evident that Christ sprang from that tribe, Heb. vii. 14. as touching his manhood; and yet this lion is the everlasting father of Judah with respect to his Godhead; hence Judah is called a *lion's whelp, that went up from the prey*, Gen. xlix. 9. from being a prey to the lion of the bottomless pit, by faith in the lion of heaven, which is God: *The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophecy?* Amos iii. 8. Christ is here called the *root of David*; because David derived his being from him as the God of nature and the creator of the world—*all things were made by Christ*, Col. i. 16. David derived his spiritual life from him as the God of grace—*Christ is the resurrection and the life*; and David expected to be glorified by him as the King of glory—*thou shalt guide me with thy council, and receive me into glory*. Ps. lxxiii. 24. Hence the Psalmist so often calls him his Lord, his King, his Redeemer, his Saviour, and the King of Glory; *Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall enter in*, Ps. xxiv. 9. Thus Jesus as God is David's root, and as man he is David's offspring; *I am the root and the offspring of*

of David, the bright and morning star, Revelations xxii. 16.

The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book. This lion hath prevailed over the lion of the bottomless pit; over sin, the devil's essence; and over death, sin's *first-born*; and over *destruction, the first-born of death*, Job xviii. 13. he hath prevailed, and led captivity captive; spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly. This is the all-conquering lion that made the devil feel the rod of his strength when he dethroned him, and cast him out of sinners hearts, destroyed his works, and marred his kingdom; and will at last destroy him with a dreadful destruction, and crush him beneath the feet of all his saints; as sure as Moses' rod, when turned into a serpent, devoured all the serpents produced by magic or infernal art.

This lion hath prevailed, not only over the world and the devil, but he hath prevailed with God also in behalf of his people. By his obedience, he prevailed to disarm the law of its curse; by prayer, he prevailed with his father for us; by death, he prevailed with justice; by his resurrection, he prevailed over death; and as a mediator, high priest, and advocate, he must ever prevail in heaven; for all power, and all judgment, are committed to him; he is ascended far above all heavens, enthroned, glorified, and *set down at the right hand of the majesty on high.* Heb. i. 3.

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The *diadem of David is removed*, and the crown put on the Saviour; all other crowns must submit to his, for all must be abased before him, and be obedient to him. He that humbled himself—he that was meek and lowly, must now be exalted, and *wear both the crown and diadem*, Ezek. xxi. 26. and be proclaimed, through heaven and earth, the *king of kings and lord of lords*. Is this the case? then oh, my soul, submit thou to his sceptre; take the oath of allegiance, and kiss the hands of this wonderful, all-conquering, and terribly majestic sovereign, as thou art commanded to do, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry*, Psalm ii. 12. and say, with a loyal and a loving heart, *O king, live for ever*; and this of him will be neither falsehood nor flattery.

And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. verse 6. I shall not mention the lamb here, the beasts, nor the elders, as they are included in my text, but drop a few words upon the horns and eyes. By the horns you are to understand the majestic or kingly power of Christ; David was *anointed with oil out of an horn*, 1 Sam. xvi. 1. hence he often speaks of *his horn*, Ps. xcii. 10. and of *his horn being exalted with honour*, Ps. cxii. 9. which horn signified the kingly power and authority that God had given him; and as the Saviour was to spring

from David, he is called a *bud* from his horn, who was to govern Zion for ever: *God hath chosen Zion, he has desired it for his habitation; there will I make the HORN of David to BUD. I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed; his enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish.* Psalm cxxxii. 16, 17. This was fulfilled at the appearance of Christ; *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.* Luke i. 68—70. Blessed be his name this is fulfilled; our mighty horn of salvation is exalted, and he makes all his people *kings and priests*; he *anoints us with his spirit*, 2 Cor. i. 21. *crowns us with knowledge*, Prov. xiv. 18. and *with loving kindness and tender mercy*, Ps. ciii. 4. and *we shall reign on the earth*, Rev. v. 10. because we are upheld by his hand; *he has horns coming out of his hand, and there is the hiding of his power.* Habb. iii. 4.

But you will say, why is he represented as having seven horns? Every horn has its signification; ten horns are called *ten kings*, Rev. xvii. 12. and Jesus Christ is a king in a seven-fold sense, represented by seven horns; he is anointed with the seven-fold gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, and on his head are many crowns, as well as many horns: First, he is *King of Glory*, Psalm xxiv. 7. Secondly, *King of Zion—I have set my King*

King upon my holy hill of Zion, Psalm ii. 6.—
 Thirdly, He is, as Tidal was, King of Nations
—Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations, Jer.
x. 7. he has power over all flesh, that he should
give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given
him, John xvii. 2. Fourthly, He is King of
Kings—by him kings reign, and princes decree justice,
Prov. viii. 15. Fifthly, He is King over sin;
sin is said to reign unto death, Rom. v. 21. but
Christ hath destroyed that monster—he was mani-
fest that he might destroy the works of the devil.
1 John iii. 8. and grace by him reigns over sin;
Sin shall not have dominion over the saints, for
they are under grace; and grace shall reign through
righteousness to life eternal, Rom. v. 21.

Sixthly, Christ is King over Death—which is
 called the *king of terrors*, Job xviii. 14.—*Death*
reigned from Adam to Moses, over all them that had
not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,
Rom. v. 14. but Christ ransomed his people from
the power of the grave, and redeemed them from
death; he was the plague of death, and the de-
struction of the grave, Hosea xiii. 14. and must
reign till he hath put down all rule, all authority, and
all power; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is
death, 1 Cor. 15, 25, 26. Seventhly, Christ is King
over devils, though against their will; he demo-
lishes the kingdom of Satan, and translates sin-
ners out of his dark dominions into his own
kingdom, and into marvellous light, having de-
stroyed him that had the power of death, that is

the devil, Heb. ii. 14. and *led him captive*, and will bruise him under our feet shortly.

Thus Christ is King of Glory, and the head of all principalities and powers;—the King of Zion—King of Nations—King of Kings—King over sin, and sin's dominion—King over death—and King over devils; *and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* Isa. ix. 7.

This wonderful *lamb with seven horns* is said to have seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. These seven spirits are not seven angels; for though the church be called *the apple of the Lord's eye*, Zech. ii. 8. yet angels are never so called that I remember; nor is the number of angels that attend the church of God confined to seven. Elisha had the whole mountains round about covered with them at Dothan, 2 Kings vi. 17. and Jacob saw such a number of them on the plains of Mahanaim, that he calls them *an host*, Gen. xxxii. 2. They all minister to the children of God in turn; not a small number only—as it is written, *Are they not ALL ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?* Heb. i. 14. and if all are ministering spirits, and all sent forth to minister, they cannot be so small a number as seven, seeing we read of *twenty thousand* at one place, Psalm lxviii. 17. and *twelve legions* at another, Matt. xxvi. 53.

But rather the Holy Ghost is intended; the number seven implying the perfection of Deity,
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he being a person in the Godhead, and equal to the Father and the Son; from whom, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, this revelation is sent to the churches, *Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful and true witness*, Rev. i. 4, 5. Or the Spirit's seven-fold gifts may be intended by the number *seven*, agreeable to ancient prophecy, *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord*, Isa. xi. 2.

These seven eyes are quoted from ancient prophecy, which came to Joshua when the corner-stone of the second temple was laid; which was to point Joshua to Christ the chief corner-stone, that is set at nought of so many builders. *Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave the gravings thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day*, Zech. iii. 9. This text I have often heard handled, and the seven eyes have been held forth as all sorts of eyes looking to Christ, some for help, and some out of envy. However, they are the eyes of the Lamb, and the eyes of him who is the stone of Israel. *For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven:*

seven: they are the eyes of the Lord [not men nor devils eyes], which run to and fro through the whole earth, Zech. iv. 10. These seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, are said to be sent forth into all the earth, Rev. v. 6. agreeable to the Saviour's promise, It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you, John xvi. 7. which, blessed be his precious name, he has. He has sent forth this seven-fold unction or eye-salve, which is, to anoint our eyes that we may see, Rev. iii. 18. These seven eyes of the Lord are sent forth into all the earth, that we who were once darkness might be made light in the Lord, Eph. v. 8. Upon the church of God there hath been, and still is, a large measure of the Spirit of God; and though not in all his fulness, yet in all his seven-fold operations, and to each living member of the mystical body of Christ, a measure to profit withal. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, which makes a man wise in the mysteries of God, and wise to salvation through faith; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, that he may take Christ for himself, whom to know is eternal life, and know how to speak
a word

a word in season to others; *to another, faith by the same Spirit*, that he may believe to the justification of his soul, and strengthen the faith of others; *to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit*, for the good of the church, that bodily and spiritual diseases may be healed by the great Physician; *to another, the working of miracles*, that the apostles might by them confirm their mission and commission; *to another, prophecy*, that a minister may forewarn the churches of evils to come, and strengthen them against them, and foretell them of good to come, and encourage their hope to expect it; *to another, discerning of spirits*, that a minister may try those upstarts that say they are apostles or evangelists, and *prove them liars, if they are not*, Rev. ii. 2. *to another, divers kinds of tongues*, that ministers may overthrow the false constructions that erroneous men, or carnal scholars, have put upon the word of God; *and to another, the interpretation of tongues*, that the pure, uncorrupted sense of scripture, may be handed down to us, instead of old wives fables and country tales, that turn from the truth; and that hard or difficult parts of scripture might be made plain to our shallow comprehensions. *But all these worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will*, 1 Cor. xii. 4—11.

These are the seven eyes and the seven spirits of God, or the Holy Ghost, who is perfect God, in his seven-fold gifts and graces, who will never leave the earth, till the last elected soul that ever shall

shall be called by grace or born again of the Spirit: for thus runs the covenant; *The word that I have put in thy mouth, and the spirit that I have put upon thee, shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever,* If. lix. 21. Hence we may conclude, that the Spirit of God will never leave the earth, till the mystery of iniquity be revealed by his light; Antichrist consumed by him, as the breath of Christ's mouth; and *the mystery of God be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the prophets,* Rev. x. 7.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, v. 7. Christ having come forth from the Father, and completed the work he gave him to do, he now was ascended to the Father, and drew nigh unto him. According to Daniel's vision, *he came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,* Dan. vii. 13, 14. which is a prophecy of the Saviour's coronation in heaven, which prophecy is fulfilled in this chapter, and confirmed in the next. *And there was a crown given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer,* Rev. vi. 2. And we find that the coronation-anthem is sung in this chapter upon

the reception of this book, *saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*, Rev. v. 12. It is a copy of his kingdom that he is here going to receive, in which he will meditate day and night, Deut. xvii. 18, 19. and order his throne, and manage his government with wisdom infinite, and rectitude divine, till his kingdom of grace shall be consummated in everlasting glory, and Zion's king be acknowledged the king eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God, worthy of all honour and glory for ever. Amen. 1 Tim. i. 17. all authority and all power beside being put down, 1 Cor. xv. 24. This will then be acknowledged, and then we shall speak of the glory of this kingdom, and talk of the power. His mighty acts shall be made known, when we are made perfect in knowledge, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom, Psal. cxlv. 11, 12. shall be displayed in the eternal blessedness of his subjects.

I come now to the words of my text—*And when he had taken the book [sealed with seven seals], the four beasts, and four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.* I will offer my thoughts under the following heads.

1st, What this sealed book is, which is here received by the Lamb.

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2dly, What these *four beasts* are who appear in company with the elders.

3dly, Who these *four and twenty elders* are, that *fall down* with the *beasts*.

4thly, The object of their adoration, *the Lamb*, and why so called.

5thly, The music or melody of their *harps*, and the cause of it.

6thly, What *their golden vials* are, and why called so.

7thly, and lastly, Describe their *odours*, said to be *the prayers of all saints*, and what a saint is.

First, What book is this which God the Father held forth, and which none but the prevailing Lion of the tribe of Judah could receive and open. I answer, it is not the *book of the law*. That the Mediator received, with all its commands, conditions, contents, and curses, before he entered upon his public ministry. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips; O Lord, thou knowest, Psal. xl. 6—9.* This ancient prophecy had been fulfilled before this *sealed book* was delivered to him, which was not done till the Saviour had finished the work of redemption. *He is the Lamb*

slain that receives this book; which shews that he had been crucified under the curse of the law, and entered the Holy of Holies with his own blood, before the delivery of this sealed book. In short, the Saviour had magnified the law, and made it honourable, by a life of perfect conformity thereto; he had preached it in all its spiritual meaning, as no other ever did, or ever will do; and by his making his soul an offering for sin, he had endured the curse of it, and thus delivered his own elect from the command of it [to do for life], and redeemed them from the curse of it [which condemns to hell]; and as a law magnified, and disarmed of its killing power, he keeps it in his own hand, that we may find access to God by a new and living way, *through the vail of his flesh*—without being arrested, captured, or cursed, by that fiery dispensation.

The law being thus magnified, and the righteousness of it *preached in the great congregation*, the law in its spiritual meaning had been published by the Saviour, and made known in the world to thousands. Therefore this sealed book cannot be that; for this had not been revealed to the sons of men when John saw it delivered, as appears plain by the *seals being closed*, which were afterwards opened in their order.

Nor is this book the *book of God's remembrance*, which he keeps in behalf of them that fear the Lord, and speak often one to another, to whom God hearkens, and whose conversation the Lord hears; *and a book of remembrance is written before him,*

him, for them that fear him, and think on his name,
Mal. iii. 16.

Nor is the black catalogue of sinners ungodly deeds intended by this book, which is a book of remembrance also, which God swears he will never forget—*The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob* (that is, by himself), *surely I will never forget any of their works,* Amos viii. 7. Sin makes an awful impression on this book, as well as on the book of conscience. *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of their heart,* Jer. xvii. 1. The point of this diamond will cut deep, when the dreadful eye of justice makes the sinner's heart transparent, and the awakening flames of wrath make conscience susceptible of feeling. But all these books will be opened at the great decisive day, to the astonishment and eternal triumph of the just, and to the endless shame, confusion, and contempt of the wicked, Dan. xii. 2. vii. 10.

Nor is the *book of life* meant by this book, in which the names and number of all the elect are enrolled, who are said to have *their names written in the book of life,* Phil. iv. 3. *and written among the living in Jerusalem, who are to be called holy,* Isa. iv. 3. *and all whose name was not found written in this book were cast into the lake of fire,* Rev. xx. 15. But this book of life had been made known more or less by the antient prophets in a mysterious way; *and afterwards was spoken by the Lord,*

and confirmed to others by them that heard him, Heb. ii. 3. The book of life was published before the reception of this book in my text; and many had received the blessings of it, and cried out under the quickening influence, as Peter did, To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, John vi. 68. The Saviour owned himself that he had delivered this book: I have given them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them, John xvii. 8. Yea, he had sent the Spirit to make it known, and apply the benefits of it; and he had commanded them to preach all the words of this life; and life and immortality had been brought to light in the minds and hearts of thousands through the gospel; yea, all that believed had passed from death unto life, and had everlasting life in them, which is the blessed contents of the book of life, and the reason why it is so called; many that were dead in trespasses and sins had been quickened together with Christ, God having forgiven them all trespasses; and John himself had been long a preacher of the word of life, and was at this time banished to the Isle of Patmos for it.

Seeing this book is not the book of the law, nor the book of life, nor the book of God's remembrance, although there may be some of all these things in it; yet the above books of law and gospel cannot be said to be sealed, as this book is; for, as was before observed, they had been made known to thousands, both Jews and Gentiles. To be short, Christ had preached the law,

law, and obeyed both precept and penalty as a priest. He had preached the gospel of eternal life as a prophet, and was now going to ascend his throne as a king; and it is the book of his kingdom that he here receives, in which lays the whole of his government both of church and world; and hence he is represented as king and conqueror, governing his subjects, and subduing his enemies throughout this book, until his kingdom be settled in heaven, and his vanquished enemies imprisoned in hell.

This book has an allusion to what Samuel did when Saul was anointed: *And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and WROTE it in a BOOK, and laid it up before the Lord, 1 Sam. x. 24, 25.* This sealed book of the Saviour's kingdom was laid up before the Lord; that is, in his secret purpose; and is now given to our elder brother, who is to reign over us: *When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me: Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. And it shall be, when he setteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write*

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him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests and levites, Deut. xvii. 14—19. In this passage we have an account of a brother that is to reign over us; which blessed character Christ bears—he is a brother born for adversity. He is to have a copy out of the law, and out of that which is before the priests and levites; and it may be observed, that almost if not the whole of this sealed book is extracted from Moses and the prophets.

This book or copy of the kingdom, which is sealed with seven seals, is the very book out of which my text is taken, called the Book of the Revelation, as appears from the first chapter, where it is stiled, *The REVELATION of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants THINGS which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified IT by his angel unto his servant John: Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the WORDS of this PROPHECY, and keep these things which are WRITTEN therein; for the time is at hand.* Rev. i. 1—3.

It is true, a great part of this book was seen by Daniel in a vision; yet he has a command: *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end, Dan. xii. 4.* and although Daniel's vision was recorded, yet that part which concerns anti-christ, and the suffering church of the Gentiles under that monster of iniquity, lay hid as close as this with its seven seals, until the Lord revealed this; a great part
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of which is a key to that, and a certain prediction of all revolutions, vicissitudes, and events, that shall take place in the church, in anti-christ, and in all kingdoms and dominions of the world; until the angel of the everlasting covenant, the God of heaven, earth, and sea, is revealed as the accomplisher of all the prophecies of this book, which he will hold in his hand when he closes the scene: *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a LITTLE BOOK open, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God should be finished.* Rev. chap. 10.

2dly. This book is said to be *sealed on the back side with seven seals.* The seals denote the secret mysteries and mysterious depths of its contents; it contains the secret mysteries of God's will; the Holy Ghost is both the seals and the sealer. What is written with the *finger of God*, Dan. v. 5. and sealed by the Holy Ghost, can never be made known by any but him who is Lord and keeper of the privy seal of heaven; Christ *has the seal of the living God*, Rev. vii. 2. He was *in the bosom of the Father*, and hath revealed the Father and his mind and will also; for *all things*, saith the Saviour, *that I have heard of my Father*
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I have made known unto you, John xv. 15. and as he hath the seal, he can open and none can shut, and shut and none can open, Rev. iii. 7. for all power is given unto him both in heaven and earth, and he hath committed all judgment unto the Son, John v. 22. and caused all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge to be hid in him; therefore he makes known the mysteries to his servants the prophets, and feeds his people with the bread of eternal life, for him bath God the Father sealed, John vi. 27.

The seals may serve to shew us that none but those who are sealed by the Spirit to the day of redemption, can ever understand this book; and indeed it is dedicated and directed to the seven churches, and to none else. The seals may represent the certain accomplishment of the prophecies of this book, as sealing shews a thing to be ratified and confirmed; which shews that the devil and anti-christ shall continue no longer than the time appointed, nor prevail any further than the limited power permitted and made known in this book: *What is written by God's finger, and sealed by God's sevenfold seal, may no man reverse, Est. viii. 8.* Hence we may conclude, that *this revelation of things is certain, and the accomplishment will be sure, Dan. ii. 45.*

3dly. As seals make a deep impression, it shews that the deep things contained under these seals will sink deep, and leave a lasting impression wherever or upon whomsoever they may fall,

fall, whether in a way of mercy or of judgment; so that they will acknowledge it to come from the court of heaven; as appears from the strange effects that the opening of each seal produced in the world and church, which have, and will leave, a stamp of infinite divinity behind; so that all shall acknowledge, as the magicians did, *that this is the finger of God.*

4thly. A seal is a kind of security. A thing written and sealed is secured to the proper owner; closed and shut up from all others. Hence the saints are called *living epistles known and read of all men*, because the law is written on the fleshy tables of their hearts by the Spirit of the living God, 2 Cor. iii. 3. by which they are sealed also; and *grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption*, Eph. iv. 30. This is the saints security and foundation of comfort, and is effectually known to none but God and themselves; nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, God knoweth them that are his, 2 Tim. ii. 19. This seal then secures the contents of this book, whether it be the portion of that wicked man of sin from God, Job xx. 29. or whether it be the cup of Zion's afflictions, that her adversaries have filled or shall fill to her, which they shall receive in their turn double, *it shall be measured unto them double*, Rev. xviii. 6. The number seven shews the perfection of the seals, the sealer, and of all things that are sealed;—to the Spirit they are all known, for he
searches

searches the deep things of God. The Saviour, who is God, and has all the fullness of the spirit on him, knows them all, *and reveals them to us by the Spirit*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. hence those that have ears to bear are exhorted in this book to bear, *what the Spirit saith unto the churches*, Rev. ii. 7. Which leads me to my second general head.

And when he had taken the book—or received it in order to loose the seals, unfold the mysteries, and send the contents of it by his angel unto his servant John, who was to see these things in the visions of God, understand them by the Spirit upon him, and to write them as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and to send them for instruction and direction, as a caution and a cordial to the seven churches that were in Asia, and by and from them to be handed down to the church of God in all succeeding ages, as a revelation from heaven, with this liberty granted—*he that hath an ear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the churches*, which is a grant to all to whom these presents shall come greeting, or to all those whom it may concern, or have any concern about the salvation of their souls, by faith in Christ Jesus. *Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.* It contains an awful warning also, and an irrevocable denunciation of vengeance on all that die in the bosom of the whore of Babylon, or are converted to Popery—*I will kill her children with death*, Rev. ii. 23.—But I proceed to the substance of my second head.

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And when he had taken the book, the FOUR BEASTS
 —Whatever these four beasts are, it is clear that all through this book they are honoured with the first view of all that is disclosed by the opening of the seals, and were employed in inviting others to behold the wonders revealed and made known by the opener of the seals—*And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come, and see, Rev. vi. 1. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come, and see, Rev. i. 3. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come, and see, Rev. vi. 5. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come, and see, Rev. vi. 7.* The indulgence granted to these beasts serves to give us an insight into what they are. First, they are allowed to look on while the Lamb opens the seals, as *Manoah and his wife did, when the angel did wonderfully before them, Judges xiii. 19.* 2dly, They are discovered in a measure by their thundering voice; *And I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come, and see, Rev. i. 1.* And 3dly, By their inviting others to approach, and behold what themselves saw.

Now who can these four beasts be to whom these things can agree, but to gospel-ministers? First, By their standing nearest to Christ, as *his ambassadors, or good stewards of his manifold grace and mysteries*; 2dly, Their having the first sight of the mysteries couched under the seals—*Unto*

you (who were apostles) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, Matt. xiii. 11. that they might teach others, observing all things that Christ had commanded them, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 3dly, By their thundering voice—And he surnamed them Boanerges, which is the sons of thunder, Mark iii. 17. 4thly, By their being made use of to invite others—And at supper-time he sent out his servants (or ministers), to invite them that were bidden—and, 5thly, By their message, Come, and see. Come, and see for yourselves—take not our word upon trust, but see and judge for yourselves—as Andrew and Philip said to Nathanael, We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. And he answered, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him (in the language of the four beasts), Come, and see, John i. 45, 46. And he went and saw, and said, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel, John i. 49. and if so, he certainly was a good thing, and a holy thing, whether he came out of Galilee, out of Nazareth, or out of Heaven. And I think if our modern Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Arians, and Arminians, had but a divine power on their wills, and the unction of the Holy One upon their understandings, they would not be so easily led blindfold by the god of this world as they are, nor would so many heedless souls be led by them; but, in obedience to the invitation of these beasts, they would come and see for themselves.

By

By the above observations, they seem to be ministers of the gospel—and 'tis clear that they were sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, by the celestial anthem that they bear a chorus in; which shews that they cannot be good angels, for they need no redemption; nor devils, for they are excluded from it; *Jesus took not on him the nature of angels*, Heb. ii. 16. nor can they be reprobate sinners, for Christ *laid down his life for his sheep*; but reprobates are not of his sheep, *ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you*, John x. 26. Therefore these beasts must be chosen sinners of the human race, whether they were preachers or private saints, according to the following part they bear in the coronation-anthem, *The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast REDEEMED US to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth*, Rev. viii. 9. 10.

If these beasts were redeemed by Christ's blood, they must be human, not angelic saints—if redeemed out of every nation, people, and tongue, they must be redeemed from among the children of men—and if out of every nation, it is most likely they were Gentiles, rather than Jews, though the Jews will by and by be gathered in again,

again, out of the various nations where they are now scattered.

As these beasts are privileged with standing nearest the Lord, and indulged with the first view of things, it is plain that they are ministers of Christ, who are stewards of the mysteries they saw—and as they are redeemed from among men, and say, *Thou hast made us kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth*, they were redeemed by Christ's blood, crowned with knowledge and loving-kindness as kings, and reigned as kings, though on the earth, under the dominion of grace, and as priests *they offered spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; which is confirmed in my text; for 'tis said *the four beasts*, as well as *the elders*, had *golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints*.

It may be inquired why they are called *beasts*. Perhaps it is intended to exhibit them as brutal sinners by nature, before they were redeemed from among the nations, tongues, and people they lay among. *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*, Jer. x. 14. *Surely I am more brutish than any man*, saith Agur, Prov. xxx. 2. *That God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts*, Eccl. iii. 18.

We have a further description of these *beasts*. The first beast was *like a lion*, the second beast *like a calf*, the third beast had a face *as a man*, and the fourth beast was *like a flying eagle*, Rev. iv. 7.

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The terrible majesty and undaunted courage of the lion represents them as whelps of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, as *Judah is called a lion's whelp*, Gen. xlix. 9. and denotes the fortitude and boldness of a gospel minister, when strengthened with spiritual might. *The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion*, Prov. xxviii. 1.—*The second beast being like a calf*, may denote the value of a gospel minister, and his quick growth in grace and knowledge—*Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall*, Mal. iv. 2. Calf is often mentioned by Isaiah as lying down with the Lamb of God, or with the lambs of his fold. *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together*, Isa. xi. 6. Gospel ministers are compared to oxen in scripture; and a lively emblem they are, when they have got the Saviour's yoke on their neck, feed themselves on the green pastures of God's word, abide by their Master's crib, and tread out the corn for others. *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written*, says Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 9.—*The third beast had a face as a man*. This shews what they really are by nature, namely men, fallen men, but now redeemed from among men; and they were men in a militant state, or representatives of them, and not the spirits of just men made perfect; for if

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they were, they must look more like angels than men, nor could they be said to reign on the earth. —*And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle; which may represent their heavenly mindedness, the eagle being a very towering flyer, to which saints are often compared. They shall mount up as on eagle's wings; they shall run, and not weary; walk, and not faint, Isa. xl. 31.* This bird may denote their spiritual knowledge and penetration, the eagle being famous for strong and quick fight. *Her eyes are said to behold afar off, Job xxxix. 29.* She is said to be very sagacious, and can scent her prey at a distance—*Her eyes behold afar off; from thence she seeketh her prey; and where the slain are, there is she, Job xxxix. 29, 30.* which may prefigure ministers, whose souls feed on Christ's flesh and blood, in a spiritual sense, by faith, and find it the only food that can entertain the troubled mind, or satisfy a wounded conscience. *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; and unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you have no life in you, John vi. 53.*

These beasts are further described, by having *six wings*; perhaps in allusion to the seraphims in Isaiah, *each having six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly, Isa. vi. 2.* The covering their faces may shew their bashfulness and modesty in the presence of God, *as virgin souls.* Their covering their feet betokens their unworthiness and unprofitableness to God—*When ye have done all these*

these things, say ye, We are unprofitable servants, Luke xvii. 10. Their flying denotes their delight and alacrity in the work of the Lord, in spreading his gospel, as an angel is represented as *flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach upon earth,* Rev. xiv. 6. which angel is a minister of the gospel—a man by nature, only an angel by office. Angels are not proper creatures to preach the gospel to us. They have not our infirmities about them; nor could we sit under them with any comfort. Their celestial language would be as much above the language of Canaan, as ours is above the language of Egypt. We must *have our treasure out of earthen vessels,* 2 Cor. iv. 7. or else we should be ready to cry out, under angelic teaching, as Daniel did, *All my comeliness is turned into corruption, and I retain no strength,* Dan. x. 8.

These beasts are said to be *full of eyes within,* chap. iv. 8. which may denote the divine light that shines within them. *God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts,* says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 6. This makes a man appear full of eyes, and a world of corruptions are discovered, both in himself and others. It is in God's light we see light; and *whatsoever maketh manifest is light.* They had need be full of eyes within and without; for they have enemies on every side, besides taking an oversight of the flock, and watching for their souls as *them that*

must give an account. There must be also a watching the hand of Providence, and the hand of God in the fulfilment of the prophecies, which are daily unfolding more or less; and as watchmen they must give warning of approaching dangers, and observe the rising and declining of the gospel sun, which seems daily going down over many prophets; besides their watchfulness as shepherds, to observe and detect foxes and ravenous wolves, *who will not spare the flock*; nor even the chief shepherd himself, if they had but power equal to their will, and could get at him.

When these beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever; then the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, Rev. iv. 9, 10.—

Another proof, and I think a sufficient one, that these beasts are ministers of the gospel; because here they are represented as beginning the worship of God, and leading it on. Under the old dispensation *the ministering servant blessed the sacrifice, and then those eat that were bidden*, 1 Sam. ix. 13. under the gospel, first of all, *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, are to be made*, 1 Tim. ii. 1. Thus preachers lead the worship, and the people follow after; as is represented here: the four beasts begin, and the elders fell down and worshipped.

John

John is shewn in this vision how ministers look in God's eyes, however they may appear in their own, called *beasts*; for such the most humble and most enlightened have often called themselves; and such the children of this world have often thought them, or Paul would never have complained, *We are as sheep accounted for the slaughter.* By their having the *face of a lion*, and the *face of a calf*, it shews there is something of the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, and something of Christ the *fatted calf* about them; and by the face of the *eagle* and the *man*, it insinuates that there is something of the *voracious nature* of the former belonging to the latter. This daring face of the man shews how self will at times make a discovery that the best of men *have like passions with the worst*, James v. 17. or else one of the best of men would never have complained of a *body of death*, nor commanded the putting off the *old man with his deeds*; which leads me to my third head; which was to shew, who these four and twenty elders are that *fall down and worship with the beasts.*

In the days of Moses the tribe of Levi was chosen out of all the rest of the tribes of Israel, to minister before the Lord, wait at the altar, and do the service of the sanctuary. This election was of God, and made manifest by a miracle; namely, by Aaron's rod budding and bearing almonds, while the other eleven rods had nothing about them but a name, Num. xvii. 8.

This ministerial tribe, being chosen of God, called to the office, and confirmed in it by a miracle, most beautifully prefigured the elected church of God in gospel times, when every believer should know his election, and see his calling clear; officiate in a better tabernacle, for the Lord is his sanctuary; offer more acceptable sacrifices in the Spirit, and wait at a better altar: *we have an altar*, whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle, Heb. xiii. 10. Hence God promised to take some from the Gentile nations, and indulge them with the glorious privileges of this tribe: *And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord*, Isa. lxvi. 19. 21.

Thus we see the election, calling, and miraculous confirmation of this tribe, is now to be found in its gospel signification among common believers of the Gentiles; who are exhorted to make their calling and election sure—to worship God in spirit and in truth—to draw near in the *ephod and teraphim* of imputed righteousness and true holiness, with the holy crown of *loving kindness and tender mercies*—to attend on Christ the *golden altar*—and to minister about holy things—and offer the pleasing and acceptable sacrifices of hearty praises, humble petitions, and a *broken and contrite heart*, which God will not despise, Psalm li. 17.

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Our glorious privileges are so great that babes in grace, as soon as Wisdom, their mother, has brought them *a little coat of needle work wrought about with divers colours, they may gird on the linen ephod of sanctification, go to Shiloe, and talk to God the Saviour for themselves.* Thus the covenant of an everlasting priesthood is confirmed to the church at large; nay, I add, that as *Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron;* which order interweaving two offices together, namely, that of a king and a priest, it opens a way for this wonderful dignity to fall upon the church of Christ, which the Levitical tribe could never boast of, for God never spoke such things of that: *But ye are a chosen generation, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God,* 1 Peter ii. 9, 10. Thus the royal and priestly order of Melchisedec is found in all their glorious meaning in the glorious King of Zion, and *high priest of our profession;* and the dignity and honour of both offices is reflected from the Saviour on the church: *He hath made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign on the earth,* Rev. i. 6. Aaron's miraculous rod that confirmed his election and calling, is now found, with its blossoms and almonds, in the church at large. I said, I see the rod of an almond tree,

Jer. i. 11: *which shall flourish*, Eccl. xii. 5. *It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God*, Isa. xxxv. 2. *whose leaf shall never wither, but they shall blossom as the rose, and fill the world with fruit.*

The family of Aaron who were priests were divided into *twenty-four courses*, 1 Chron. xxiv. 1—19. and these twenty-four courses all waited or attended on their ministry in turn. And all those four and twenty courses of ministers, with their election, call, and privileges, are now found in the church in a gospel sense, and are confirmed with many additional blessings and privileges which they never had; and which will end in the eternal salvation and glorification of every spiritual priest, which theirs did not. These four and twenty elders represent the churches of God at large, which were prefigured under the old testament by twenty-four courses of ministers or priests. This appears plain, as the scriptures call every saint a priest, a levite; yea, kings and priests, or a royal priesthood: and in these four and twenty courses young *learners* were numbered as well as the *preachers* that taught; to shew, that the babe in grace should be included in the gospel signification of their order, as well as the strong man in Christ: *And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great,*
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the teacher as the scholar, were numbered, 1 Chron. xxv. 8. Blessed for ever be that spiritual priest, into whose lap the lot of eternal life falls. *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 33. This lot *causes contention to cease*, Prov. xviii. 18. And indeed there is no stopping the clamorous mouth of Satan, conscience, and unbelief, till we are persuaded that *we shall rest, and stand in God's lot at the end of the days*, Dan. xii. 13. Thus it appears, that these *four and twenty elders* who fall down and worship, are representatives of the church of Christ at large, prefigured by the twenty-four courses of priests, which represented the church as a royal priesthood.

The name elder is often applied to the first-born son—*Shem the brother of Japheth the elder*, and represents the children of God as the elder or first born by election; and no wonder, when they *were predestinated to the adoption of sons*, before any man-child was born into the world.—Abel was Adam's younger son, Isaac was the younger of Abraham, Jacob of Isaac, and Ephraim of Joseph: but in God's decree they were not so. They were first-born sons by promise, as Isaac was, that they might inherit the home-stall, agreeable, both to the law, Deut. xxi. 15, 16. and the promise, *And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac*, Gen. xxv. 5. Esau was before Jacob; yet the Israelites, not the Edomites, are called God's first born. *Israel is my son* (says God)

God) *even my first born. And I say unto thee, Let my son go [Pharaoh], that he may serve me : and if thou refuse to let him go, I will slay thy son, even thy first born, Exod. iv. 22, 23.*

Elders are magistrates that used to sit on seats, at the city gates, to hear debates, try causes, settle disputes, and bear witness to contracts; hence you so frequently read of the *gates of the elders*, Prov. xxx. 23. and of the elders at the gates bearing witness to Boaz's redeeming Naomi's inheritance, and betrothing Ruth, Ruth iv. 11.

And if you read the description of the wonderful city called the Heavenly Jerusalem, you will see elders there. *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God; and her light was like a stone most precious; and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written therein, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; which shews that the twelve patriarchs, fathers of the twelve tribes, whose names the tribes bore, who all sprung from Jacob, and were called Israelites, a name which is now entailed on every believer, who may call himself by the name of Jacob, or surname himself by the name of Israel, Isa. xlv. 5. being a son of peace, and of the Israel of God, Gal. vi. 16. I say, these elders having their names at the twelve gates of this city, inclines me to think, that in the gospel-signification of their names, they are one half of these four and twenty elders*

elders who represent the whole Israel of God in the various gospel-characters that their names signify.

The twelve gates, *three east, three west, three north, and three south*, Rev. xxi. 13. is to shew, that *many shall come from the east, west, north, and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God*, Luke xiii. 29. If these twelve names, at the twelve gates of this city, are twelve of the elders, as representatives of the church, in the gospel-signification of their names, it is to shew that none can pass these elders, or enter into the gates of the city, by them, unless they are *Israelites indeed*, as Nathanael was, John i. 47. or a part of God's Israel, *which is a name and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off*, Isa. lv. 13.

The name of this city is Jerusalem, *righteousness and peace*, to shew that none but justified souls, in a state of peace and reconciliation with God, can enter therein. It is the royal city of the Great King, in which he resides—*And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there*, Ezek. xlvi. 35. If so, a dead sinner cannot enter there, nor live in the presence of God; for *in his favour is life, and in his presence fulness of joy*, Psal. xxx. 5. which shews that they must be quickened by the Holy Ghost, and find favour with God, that enter these gates. And if these twelve patriarchs whose names the twelve tribes bore, being written on these gates, are
 twelve

twelve of the elders of this city, as I really believe they are, they do represent the church of God in her twelve different states and conditions, signified by the gospel sense of their names; and they appear to be elders by their names at the gates of this city. *Three gates north; one gate of REUBEN, one gate of JUDAH, one gate of LEVI; on the east side, one gate of JOSEPH, one gate of BENJAMIN, one gate of DAN; on the south side, one gate of SIMEON, one gate of ISSACHAR, one gate of ZEBULUN; on the west side, one gate of GAD, one gate of ASHER, one gate of NAPHTALI, Ezek. xlviii. 31—34.*

I come now to the signification of these names, by which these twelve patriarchs represent the whole Israel or church of God.

1st, REUBEN, by his name, represents the family of God as *children of light*. *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light*. Reuben represents, by name, the fraternity of God as children of light. *And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; and she bare a son, and called his name REUBEN; for she said, Surely the Lord hath LOOKED upon my affliction, Gen. xxix. 31, 32.*

2dly, JUDAH represents the church of God as God's own workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my PRAISE, Isa. xliii. 21. Judah signifies PRAISE GOD.*

GOD. *And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I PRAISE Jehovah; therefore she called his name Judah, Gen. xxix. 35.*

LEVI, by name, represents the church of God in the character of *the Lamb's wife*, who is made one with Christ; for they that are joined to the Lord are of one spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17. We are of the Saviour's flesh and of his bones. *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his church, Eph. v. 32.* Levi signifies JOINED, united, or in union. *And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be JOINED to me: THEREFORE was his name called LEVI.*

JOSEPH was a type of the church, as a fruitful mother, or an increasing kingdom. His name signifies ADDITION, or increase; as the kingdom of Christ must increase. *And she conceived and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name JOSEPH; and said, The Lord shall ADD to me another son, Gen. xxx. 23, 24.* Zion shall be prolific. *Shall I bring to the birth, and not give strength to bring forth? Before she travailed, she was delivered of a man-child. Shall a nation be born at once? Before Zion travailed, she brought forth her children, Isa. lxvi. 7, 8.* Nor shall she ever be barren. God shall add to her many sons, and daughters too. She shall have five wise virgins marriageable, that shall be taken into the marriage chamber, when the Bridegroom cometh to judgment.

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BENJAMIN, by his name, represents the safety of the church in the hand of God the Father, and God the Son; out of which hands Christ says they shall never be plucked. *None shall pluck them out of my hands. My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. I and my Father are one.* They are right-hand sons; and at the right hand of the Judge they shall appear at the great day, when the goats shall stand on the left. *Benjamin signifies the SON OF THE RIGHT HAND.* And he is called *the beloved of the Lord, who shall dwell in safety by him; the Lord shall cover him all the day long; and he shall dwell between his shoulders,* Deut. xxxiii. 12. *And Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name BEN-ONI (the son of my sorrow), but his father called him BENJAMIN (the son of my right hand),* Gen. xxxv. 16—18.

DAN, by his name, represents the church of God in a justified state, whose judgment is already past—and they are a righteous nation, who have taken their trial, been judged at the bar of the law, brought in guilty by it, condemned and silenced, and justified by an act of grace which passed upon them, through faith in Christ Jesus; and they are justified from all things from which they never could be justified by the law of Moses. Dan signifies JUDGMENT, and may represent the church of Christ upon the seat of judgment with the Judge,

Judge, seeing they have been his witnesses in the world, and will be the same at the great day. *And Rachel said, God hath JUDGED ME, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: THEREFORE she called his name DAN, Gen. xxx. 6.*

SIMEON, by name, represents the church of God as true Israelites, who are prevalent with God in prayer, whose prayers God hears—for *his eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers.* And they are an obedient people to the Saviour's voice, whom they hear and obey. *My sheep hear my voice, and follow me.* Simeon signifies THAT HEARS, obeys, or is heard. *And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the Lord hath HEARD that I was bated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name SIMEON, Gen. xxix. 33.*

ISSACHAR, by his name, represents the church of God as the Saviour's hire or reward. He had the elect for redeeming them. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and I lay down my life for the sheep.* They are the reward of the Saviour's labour, as the spangled sheep was the hire of Jacob, as well as his wife. *And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife; and for a wife he kept sheep, Hof. xii. 12.* And so did our blessed Saviour. He assumed our nature, was among us as him that served, paid the debts of his spouse, quickened her dead soul, and espoused her to himself, as the purchase of his blood, and the reward of his labour. *Jacob's time seemed but*

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a day for the love he had for Rachel, who was the object of his reward; for a wife he kept sheep. And for the joy that was set before Christ, he endured the cross, and despised the shame, Heb. xii. 2. which joy consisted in glorifying his Father, in his being glorified in his human nature, and in the marriage of his wife, and eternal glorification of her. Issachar signifies hire or reward. And God bearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me mine HIRE, because I have given my maiden to mine husband: and she called his name Issachar, Gen. xxx. 17, 18.

ZEBULUN, by name, represents the church of God as residing in the cleft of the rock Christ, Song ii. 14. of whom Zion says, *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations, Psal. xc. 1. in whom they live, move, and have their being, and in whom they are commanded to stand fast. Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. Zebulun signifies DWELLING. And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry: now will my husband DWELL with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun.*

GAD, by name, represents the church as the Lord's host, or an army with banners, Song vi. 10. called the host of the Lord, a good company of soldiers; the camp of saints, Rev. xx. 9. engaged in the fight of faith, 1 Tim. vi. 12. a troop of good soldiers of Jesus Christ, who are to endure hardness, 2 Tim. ii. 3. to put on the whole armour of
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of God, Eph. vi. 11. and overcome the world, 1 John v. 4. Gad signifies a troop. And Zilpah, Leab's maid, bare Jacob a son. And Leab said, A troop cometh; and she called his name Gad, Gen. xxx. 10, 11.

ASHER, by his name, represents the church in her covenant state, being blessed of God, and under the blessing of Abraham. As many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, Gal. iii. 9. which Zion certainly is; for it is on the mountain of Zion that the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore, Psal. cxxxiii. 3. And this shall be proclaimed aloud in the great day, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom. Asher signifies blessedness, or being made happy under a blessing, which all God's people are, more or less. And Zilpah, Leab's maid, bare Jacob a second son. And Leab said, HAPPY am I, for the daughters will call me BLESSED: and she called his name ASHER, Gen. xxx. 12, 13.

NAPHTALI, by his name, represents the church of God as mighty prevailers, struggling hard both with heaven and earth; like Jacob, they must wrestle hard with God for a blessing, Gen. xxxii. 24. or they will never take the kingdom of God by force, which is said to suffer violence, Matth. xi. 12. And they are obliged to wrestle with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places, Eph. vi. 12. in order to overcome the world. Naphtali signifies a mighty or prevalent wrestler. And Bilhah, Rachel's maid, con-

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ceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With GREAT WRESTLINGS have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name NAPHTALI, Gen. iii. 7, 8.

These particulars highly induce me to think that these twelve patriarchs, in the signification of their names, are twelve of these elders mentioned in my text. First, they all sprung from Jacob, whose name Christ assumed, Psa. xxiv. 6. and which name every saint of God may assume, Isa. xlv. 5. Secondly, they were the fathers of all the Israelites; and they are all Israelites that believe in Christ for salvation, called the *Israel of God*. These patriarchs all sprung from Abraham, *who is the father of us all*, Rom. iv. 16. and from Sarah, who in the allegory is *the free woman, and the mother of us all*, Gal. iv. 26. Hence we are commanded to *look to Abraham our father, and to Sarah that bare us*. Thirdly, these patriarchs were the fathers from whence the twenty-four courses of priests sprung; and by their names being at the gates of this city, they appear to be the elders of this city; and the gates the gates of these elders; and unless we are Israelites by grace, as these patriarchs were by nature, and interested in those things signified by their names, we never can enter the gates of this city. We must produce our register, as they could, and our genealogy both, *as written among the living in Jerusalem*, Isa. iv. 3. else we shall find no admittance into this city, much less into the

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the sanctuary; we shall be stopped in the *outer court*, which the reed of God's word is not to *measure*, because 'tis to be trodden under foot, as every outer-court worshipper will be, Rev. xi. 2. God will *trample* hypocrites in his fury, Isa. lxiii. 3. and expose them to as much contempt as *the children of Habaiah, the children of Coz, and the children of Barzillai, who could not prove their descent from Israel by register or genealogy, and therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood*, Nehem. vii. 63, 64.

The other twelve elders mentioned in my text, I believe to be the twelve apostles of the Lord. They in scripture are stiled elders: Peter says, *The elders I exhort, who am also an elder*. John stiles himself *the elder unto the elect Lady and her children*. The twelve apostles are said to have their names in the foundations of this city of the living God: *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*, Rev. xxi. 14. As the apostles are called elders, and are said to have their names in the foundations of this city, it shews that they were doctrinally or ministerially the founders of it. We all know that 'twas *God that founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it*, Isa. xiv. 32. and that *he that built all things is God*, Heb. iii. 4. yet he used wise master-builders to lay the foundation doctrinally: *I, as a wise master-builder, says Paul, have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let him take heed*

how he buildeth thereupon, 1 Cor. iii. 10. God the Father laid Christ in his own decree and purpose; hence he is called an elect stone, which God laid, 1 Pet. ii. 6. and revealed him to the prophets, who laid him in their ministry. The apostles succeeding the prophets laid him more clearly and extensively, even in the Gentile world; and every child of God is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded, for an habitation of God through the Spirit, Eph. ii. 20—22.

To the apostles were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, all that they loosed on earth were loosed in heaven, and all that they bound on earth were bound in heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. Now as the church of God is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, for an habitation of God through the Spirit, it appears that this habitation of God is this city that I am speaking of; for this city is said to have the glory of God in it, and her light was like a stone most precious, Rev. xxi. 11. This city is likewise called the bride, the Lamb's wife, Rev. xxi. 9, 10. if so, this city must consist of such souls as the apostles espoused to a good husband, and presented as chaste virgins to Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 2. This whole city consisteth of souls that were not defiled with the errors of mystical Jezabel, Rev. ii. 20. or the mystical

tical whore of Babylon, Rev. xvii. 1. 5. This city consists of such *as were not defiled with these women, for they are virgins*, Rev. xiv. 4.

Thus it appears that the twelve patriarchs, in the gospel signification of their names, are twelve of these elders that represent the church of God in my text; and their having their names at the gates, seems to shew that they are the elders of this city; and unless we are Israelites, or *inwardly Jews, circumcised in heart, and worshippers of God in the Spirit*, Phil. iii. 3. we shall not be able to find our *names on the book of life*, Phil. iv. 3. or *written among the living in this new Jerusalem*.

You may object and say, the new Jerusalem signifies the triumphant church, which is *let down from heaven*; or the *spirits of just men made perfect*, coming with Christ in the clouds of heaven to receive their dead bodies raised again and to be united to them, being those *blessed ones that have a part in the first resurrection*. Be that as it may, let us look nearer home;—matters will go well with us in that day, if we are found to be true citizens. Paul says, *We are come to mount Zion*, and unto the *city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the *general assembly and church of the first born*, which are *written in heaven*, and to God the judge of all, and to the *spirits of just men made perfect*; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which

speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 22—24. Happy are such souls; they are no more *strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*, Eph. ii. 19, 20. all this is true of you, if you are upon the rock Christ.

The apostles laid the foundation of this city, and have their names engraved thereon; and had formerly the keys of it, to let all in that were *loosed on earth* by their ministry; and we must be partakers of the same spirit, and receive the same truth in the love of it which they delivered; for 'tis the spirit and the word of truth which are the keys, and it is the word and spirit that make us free; *where the spirit is, there is liberty*, 2 Cor. 17. ye shall know the truth, *and the truth shall make you free*, John viii. 32. Thus you find the spirit and the word lets us into liberty; when this is the happy and blessed case with us, we are free men of this city. *Isaac was by the free woman; Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all; so then we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free*, Gal. iv. 31. if so, we are free-born sons of this mother, and have a right to the inheritance given of God by promise to every heir of promise, and shall never be shut out of this city, as the bond-woman and her children will be.

As free men we may trade in this city; all the elders will encourage us in it; and, as the Lord says, *we may go in and out and find pasture*. Thus these four and twenty elders, consisting of the offspring of Abraham, the twelve literal builders of the house of Israel, and the twelve spiritual builders of the church of God, have their names on the gates and foundations of this city; and as a complete senate or parliament they represent the children of God in all their privileges as Israelites, and as followers of the blessed Redeemer in the regeneration, till the world ends. Which leads me to my next general head, which is to consider,

Fourthly, The object of their adoration, *the Lamb*; and why so called.

If Jesus Christ be not really, essentially, and eternally God; if he be not the self-existent and independent JEHOVAH, they are every one idolaters; *I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods before me*, Exod. xx. 1—3. *For thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord, whose name is JEALOUS, is a jealous God*. But the testimony this faithful and true witness bears to his own proper deity is sufficient; *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*, Rev. i. 8. and again, *I am Alpha, and Omega, the first and the last*, verse 11. If so there is none before him, nor shall be after him, which is proof of his eternity; and though this be

denied by many, yet he will let all his enemies know that he is the all-seeing and heart-searching God; *I will kill [Jezabel's children] with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give to every one of you according to your works,* Rev. ii. 23. Strange language this for a creature.

The essential deity of this blessed object of faith, seems to be the main stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, that the unbeliever is to stumble at: *Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days that ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you,* Acts xiii. 41. But those that are led by the Spirit to see and believe this essential article of our faith, namely, the personal divinity of the Saviour, they will see the privilege, and soon feel the blessed effects of calling upon him as the object of worship: *It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved: But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* Rom. x. 14. 'Tis in vain to call on his name as an object of prayer, if thou dost not believe his deity; *call him not good unless thou believe his God-head; there is none good but one, that is God.* But if thou believe him to be *both Lord and master* thou doest well, for he is so.

Blessed be God, he does not leave his own elect to stumble at this *rock of offence*; he sends the comforter, the spirit of truth, from the Father, to *testify of him,* John xv. 26. and to convince

convince us of our need of him as one mighty to save. To talk of an eternal salvation from sin and satan, death and hell, by a creature, is mere nonsense—*vain is the salvation of man*, Psa. lx. 11. *He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death*, Psalm lxviii. 20. And this God of salvation is Jesus; *for there is salvation in no other name*, Acts iv. 10—12. These elders know what they are about; all the hosts of heaven pay divine worship to him, though there are so many in this world that withhold it, *being wiser in their generation than the children of light*, Luke xvi. 8. *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*, Heb. i. 6. and the command is the same to Zion, *He is thy Jehovah, and worship thou him*, Psalm xlv. 11.

I will never believe that there ever was an Arian that could give any true account of a work of regeneration on his soul, or of his being born again of the Holy Ghost; and as they are sensual men, having not the spirit, nothing can be expected from them but lies and confusion; *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*, Rom. ii. 14. The Saviour will ever be glorified by the Holy Ghost wherever that Spirit comes; and he will be glorified as God and Saviour by no other spirit, nor by any but those that have the Spirit: *When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth:*

truth: For he shall not speak of himself, he shall glorify me, John xvi. 13, 14.

The first powerful command that was attended with a divine ray to my soul was this, "Go and pray to Jesus Christ;" I went in obedience to the heavenly vision, and in answer to the first extempore prayer put up to the name of the Lord Jesus, I came out of as much real and imaginary horror as any mere mortal could bear up under. I would bear this testimony, and swear to it with my dying breath. He that denies the Saviour's being the self-existent and independent Jehovah, is in his natural state, in a state of unbelief, and in a fair way for a share in the damnation of hell: *If ye believe not that I AM ye shall die in your sins, John viii. 24. and if they die in their sins where Christ is they cannot come, ver. 21.* This I see, that the saints of God are every way instructed, and the word of God is every way fulfilled; *evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, 2 Tim. iii. 13.*

It is clear, from the chapter out of which my text is taken, that these spiritual worshippers worship the Lamb with equal adoration to that of the Father; *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that setteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said Amen, Rev. vi. 13, 14. For the Father judgeth no man,*

man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him, John v. 22, 23.

Having treated briefly of the object of their worship, *the Lamb*, I come now to shew why he is so called.

First, Because of his innocency; he having done no sin, *neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. ii. 22. yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief, Isa. liii. 10.*

Secondly, Because of his meekness and gentleness in the hands of his enemies, and submission to their cruelty and rage. A lamb makes little resistance in the hands of a butcher, and less in the hand of its shearers; no animal of its size so passive and meek. There is nothing about it but is useful; nor any thing in its nature that is voracious, cunning, sly, or savage; to which the Saviour is compared in his meek and gentle deportment—*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken, Isaiah liii. 7, 8.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, He is compared to a lamb on account of his usefulness. There is nothing about a lamb but is useful. It is excellent food, if not the very best of *animal food*; hence the Saviour says, *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*, John vi. 55. *who so eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day*, verse 54. This spiritual eating and drinking shews the mysterious union there is between Christ and the believer; for as food received, digested, and concocted, nourishes every part of the body, and increases it, so the soul who receives the Saviour by faith into his heart, as crucified for him, finds the sentence of death, his soul-deadness removed, and life divine communicated; *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him*, verse 56. All other food perishes; but this food is spiritual and divine; and is no less than an eternal feast of *fat things*, intended to entertain a troubled mind, quicken and nourish a perishing soul, and satisfy the boundless desires of it with the love of God. Such souls should live above the fear, as they shall surely live above the power, of all that is called death—*He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever*, John vi. 58.

The wool of the lamb is excellent for cloathing, as well as the skin for other uses—*The lambs are for thy CLOATHING, and the goats are the price of the field*, Prov. xxvii. 26. And I believe there is some sweet meaning in this text: *I will lay*
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sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with SKIN, and put breath in you and you shall live, Ezek. xxxvii. 6. However, the Saviour is not only the food of our souls, but our cloathing also—Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. xiii. 14. and walk in him, Col. ii. 6. He is our covering—Blessed is the man whose sin is covered, Ps. xxxii. 1. The Lord hath covered me with the robe of his righteousness, Isa. lxi. 10. and unless he does we shall be found naked, Rev. xvi. 15. In short, we must feed on him, or die; we must be found in his righteousness or be damned, and that is the truth of it.

Fourthly, There is no other fountain opened for sin but the Lamb's blood. All that are in heaven *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. and if he wash us not we have no part in him, John xiii. 8.* No cleansing but this can purge the conscience from the sting of guilt, the curse and wrath of the law, or from dead works, *that we may serve the living God, Heb. ix. 14.* He that is a stranger to the blood of the Lamb, is pursued and haunted by the wrath of God, the sentence of death, and a guilty conscience; no fountain but the blood of the Lamb of God can *sprinkle the heart from an evil conscience, Heb. x. 22.* No peace, no reconciliation or friendship, with a sin-avenging God, but by an application of this atoning blood; this is the *blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 24.—*

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Under this atonement of the Lamb the Israelites escaped the destroying angel's sword in Egypt: *By faith Moses kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them*, Heb. xi. 28. And you pharisaical advocates for a form of godliness, who have so often said "O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace," see that you reject not this fountain; if you do, you reject all peace and reconciliation with God; and the consequence will be, that an awful separation and an infinite distance will take place between you and the *fountain of life*, and an eternal war will commence where the loss will be all your own; *He will draw his sword, and come down on the people of his curse to judgment*, Isa. xxxiv. 5. *by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many*, Isa. lxvi. 16. You that despise this fountain of the Lamb's blood shall feel his wrath; and though you never asked for an interest in him, yet you shall pray to be hid from him: *The kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, rocks, and mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, Rev. xvi. 15, 16.

To whom this Lamb is no Saviour, he will be an inexorable judge. They that never
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fued for his grace shall feel his wrath; he will curse his enemies once for all—*Depart from me ye cursed*, Matt. xxv. 41. and they will curse him—*they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God*, Isa. viii. 21. and pierce their own souls by it, and that to all eternity. Happy, and eternally blessed, is that soul that can say from his own experience, *the blood of Christ cleanse us from all sin*. The saints best performances stand in need of washing; and our vile and corruptible bodies, which are to be changed, and divested of all corruption and raised in incorruption, with which we are to be clothed when mortality is swallowed up of life, must have a washing in this fountain of the Lamb's blood: *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple*, Rev. vii. 14, 15.

He is called *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8. Indeed he was slain in the purpose of God from all eternity; and in God's secret council and fore-knowledge his death was decreed, purposed, appointed, and determined from all eternity. Jesus, speaking of his death, saith, *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world*, John xviii. 37. He was delivered by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God, though it was by the instrumentality of ungodly men that he was
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taken, and by wicked hands he was crucified and slain, Acts ii. 23.

He is called *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, being typified by the offerings that Abel brought, called the *firstlings of his flock*, Gen. iv. 4. which were *lambs*; and through them, by faith, Abel looked to the *Lamb of God*, the woman's seed promised, who was to come, and by faith he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, Heb. xi. 4. and on this account God had respect to Abel and to his offering, but to Cain and to his offering he had not respect, Gen. iv. 4, 5. which Cain could discern, and therefore he was *wrath and his countenance fell*. God had respect to Abel in Christ Jesus; and Abel's faith was looking through the type to the anti-type; on which account God had respect to his offering. Had the act of faith and the object of faith been out of the question, the offering had been no better than a vain oblation; and the declaration and question would have been, *I delight not in the blood of bullocks, lambs, or he goats: Who hath required this at your hands?* Isa. i. 12. But by faith Abel offered, and obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh, Heb. xi. 4.

In both these senses he is *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* decretively and typically, and was slain in the evening of the world in reality. This decretive and typical slaying of the Lamb from the foundation of the world,
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and his being slain in reality in the *evening*, or *supper time* of it, Luke xiv. 17. or, as Paul says, in the end of the world *both he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, Heb. ix. 26. this was prefigured under the law every day; that the Israelites might look back and see how every saint had been saved; and that they might look forward, in hope and expectation of a Saviour to come, called the *hope and strength of the children of Israel*, Joel. iii. 16. and to them he was *hope to come*; for which *hopes sake* Paul was accused, Acts xxvi. 7. *Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer in the evening: This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee*, Exod. xxix. 38, 39. 42. Thus was the Lamb of God set before Israel every morning and evening; until that abominable monster, that enemy to God, Antiochus, commanded sacrifice to idols, which many Israelites followed: He forbid burnt-offerings, sacrifices, and drink-offerings in the temple, and polluted the sanctuary, 1 Mac. i. 41 — 46. *Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifice of the morning and evening lamb was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down*, Dan. viii. 11.

The Saviour was typified by the *paschal lamb* that was to be slain once a year, called the *Passover*, in commemoration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, and escaping the destroying angel's sword, under the atoning blood of the paschal lamb upon their door posts. This deliverance out of Egypt, and escape from divine wrath, was to lead their faith to their great deliverer, who should deliver them from their spiritual enemies—much worse than Pharaoh; and from the yoke and curse of the law—far worse than the yoke of servitude in Egypt. This yearly sacrifice was to teach them that Christ would die once for all: Once in the world he should offer himself; and by his one offering for ever perfect all that are chosen out of the world, or sanctified; that is, set apart in the decree of God to be redeemed, saved, and glorified by Christ Jesus; which leads me to my next general head, which is to shew,

Fifthly, The music and melody of their harps, and the cause of it.

Harp were appointed for the Levites by David. Instrumental and vocal music were to go together in the worship of God: *And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy, 1 Chron. xv. 16.* Though harps were in vogue long before the days of David; Jubal, in the days of Adam, had *children that could handle*

handle the harp and organ, Gen. iv. 21. Laban talked to Jacob of sending him away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp, Gen. xxxi. 27. And we read of a company of prophets in the days of Saul, coming down from the high place, with psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and an harp before them, 1 Sam. x. 5. These harps were used in the worship of God, and were typical of the heavenly music of believing hearts in gospel times: When the church of God should be as Eden—as the very garden of the Lord; joy and gladness being found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody, Isa. li. 3.

The melody or music mentioned in my text, seems to be used on three occasions: 1st. At the coronation of the King of Kings, and the conquests he was sure to gain over his own and his church's enemies: *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer, Rev. vi. 1, 2. Here we have the Saviour as the Lord of hosts, or God of armies, mounted.—The colour and undaunted courage of the horse represents the purity, the swiftness, and the irresistible force of the gospel of salvation in its rapid progress; a mighty salvation is compared to the swiftness and undaunted courage of this warlike animal: Was the Lord displeased with the*

rivers? [of Nilus or Jordan] Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the [red] sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation? Hab. iii. 8.

2dly. The Lord is represented as having a bow in his hand, which is his word: *Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word, Hab. iii. 9.* This bow, being the word of Christ, is to shew the convincing and convicting power that goes to sinners hearts by the Spirit from the publication of it. This piercing and penetrating force is often compared to arrows sent from this bow: *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me, says Job vi. 4.*

3dly. The Saviour is represented as having a crown given unto him; which shews his coronation in heaven, and is a fulfilment of this prophecy: *And thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem, and take off the crown: This shall not be the same, exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him, Ezek. xxi. 25, 26, 27.* And who can this be, that has a right to David's crown and diadem, but Christ, who was the fruit of David's loins, according to the flesh, raised up to sit on his throne? Acts ii. 30. *As a mighty*

a mighty horn of salvation in the house of God's servant David, Luke. i. 69: Who, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice for ever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts (having not only promised) but performed this, Isa. ix. 7. Thus the cause of this music in my text is, the coronation of Christ in heaven, he is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And secondly, on account of the wonderful conquests he should achieve in behalf of his church, as appears by the following account; which serves to shew us, that those reprobates who resist the bow of God, and oppose the sword of the Spirit, are numbered to the sword of war, and fall under the slain; which appears from the troop horse and his war colour that goes forth after the stately white one. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come, and see. And there went out another horse that was RED; and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword. Rev. vi. 3, 4.

The next horse represents famine, a natural consequent of war. Before an army, a fruitful land is represented as the garden of Eden, but behind it, a desolate wilderness, Joel ii. 3. An army is like the Egyptian locust, it leaves nothing green, Exod. x. 15. which is represented by the black colour of this horse, and by the balances of his rider. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come, and see. And I be-

held, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The next vision shews the dreadful effects of war and famine, and the certain destruction that sinners bring on their souls, as well as war and famine on their bodies, by their rebellion against Christ Jesus. This horse is *destruction*, with *death* on his *back*, and hell at his heels: *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth beast say, Come, and see. And I looked, and behold A PALE HORSE; and his name that sat on him was DEATH, and HELL followed with him, Rev. vi. 7, 8.* Thus the beasts and elders seeing the coronation of Christ, and having obtained salvation by him; and seeing the wars, famine, destruction, and damnation that attended their rebellious persecutors and opposers, sing this glorious anthem, and make this wonderful melody with their harps.

These harps are used again, at a complete victory obtained over the *pope*, and the *whore of Babylon* (called *Jezabel*), by faith in the blood of the Lamb; both over their *malice*, and over their *errors*, on which account *they* are called virgins, *said to be not defiled with women, Rev. xiv. 4.* that is they had not been *corrupted*, nor *defiled*, by committing *fornication with Jezabel*, nor taken with her painted face, 2 Kings ix. 30. Rev. ii. 20.

nor

nor with the *whore of Babylon*, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, Rev. xvii. 2.

These harps are used by those that *stand on the sea of glass*, which is the gospel dispensation, in allusion to the *glass sea made by Moses* for the priests to wash in; which, on the account of the pureness, clearness, and heart warming comforts of the gospel dispensation, is compared to a *sea of glass mingled with fire*, Rev. v. 2. the gospel being compared to a *glass*, through which the believer looks till he is changed into the image of Christ from glory to glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

The saints of God are represented as standing here: Christ as the sum and substance of the gospel, is our sea, laver, or fountain open for sin and uncleanness, by whom we are cleansed and renewed; and standing on this sea of glass, represents the saints as having got the victory over the pope, or antichrist; over his *image*, or ecclesiastical power; over his mark in the forehead or hand, which many receive to save their lives. This double mark in the hand and forehead, represents first, the oath of allegiance to him, to defend him in his villany; or in the forehead, is openly to espouse his cursed cause; but those that stand on this sea had overcome both the beast and the whore; they had not been conquered by the one, nor defiled by committing fornication with the other, and therefore *they*

stand on the sea of glass, with the harps of God in their hands, Rev. xv. ii.

In short, the Saviour, as the only mediator between God and man, had took the book of the law, and preached it, fulfilled it, magnified it, and redeemed his people from the curse of it: As a prophet he had taken the book of life and published it, and both were gone forth: *The law was gone forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* It was on the coronation of Christ, his ascension to his throne, and the reception of this book of the Revelation, or the copy of his kingdom, that the beasts, elders, and angels, sing their anthems, and sound these harps; which leads me to my sixth general head, which is a description of

Their golden vials, and why so called.

1st. Let it be observed, that under the old law there was a golden table and many more sacred things, which are mentioned in this admirable book of the Revelation: *For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew bread; which is called the sanctuary, Heb. ix. 2.* This court prefigured Christ in his state of humiliation, and the church in its militant state; where the candlestick represented the church, Rev. i. 20. The golden table, typified *the fleshy tables of the believers hearts, where the law is written by the Spirit of the living God, 2 Cor. iii. 3.* and in which Christ dwells by faith, Eph. iii. 17.

The

The shew bread represented Christ *the bread of life, that a man may eat thereof and never die*, John vi. 50. this shew bread is called the *bread of faces*, which likewise prefigures the saints of God, *who being many are one bread*, 1 Cor. x. 17. and, by feeding on Christ by faith, they shall appear at last in the true tabernacle, or heaven itself, *and in the presence of God, or before his face; blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God*, Matt. v. 8.

On this golden table, on which was set the golden candlestick, representing the church of God with its six branches, or the seven churches of Asia, Rev. i. 4. were set some golden vials, or bottles, filled with incense, as are mentioned by Josephus in his histories of the Jews, and in the second chapter of *Esdras*, which golden vials full of incense prefigured the hearts of believers, who are blessed with *the spirit of grace and supplication. And this was the number of them, a thousand golden cups, and a thousand of silver; censers of silver, twenty nine; VIALS OF GOLD, thirty*, 1 Esdras ii. 13. Mention is made again of this mysterious article: *And the table of shew-bread, and the pouring vessels, AND THE VIALS, and the censers of gold, and the veil; all which he [Antiochus] pulled off*, Macc. i. 22. This was to fulfil an ancient prophecy concerning Antiochus, who was to *magnify himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was to be taken away, and the place of God's sanctuary to be cast down*, Dan. viii. 11. Thus it appears that the golden vials in my text are mentioned in allusion
to

to the vials that were placed in the sanctuary of the Lord, which were made of gold, and filled with incense. These golden vials of *sweet incense*, being placed on the golden table in the sanctuary, served to typify the spiritual prayers that should go up from the fleshly tables of believing hearts in gospel times, when the divine fire of love from Christ the altar, should make prayer a rich perfume; when the church should become the true tabernacle that God himself pitched, and in which the Spirit of grace and supplication would reside, as in his own sanctum.

Sometimes in scripture a believing heart, blessed with the unction of the Holy Ghost, is called the vessel of a *lamp with oil*, but *the wise took oil in their vessels*; which divine unction feeding the believer's profession *makes him a burning and a shining light in the world*; yea it *causes his light to shine before men*, and his good works to appear in the sight of them.

Sometimes a believing heart filled with the comforts of the Spirit is compared to *new wine in new bottles*, Matt. ix. 17. and that on the account of the unutterable joy and delight which the believer feels and experiences in communion with the Saviour, which makes religion the delight of his soul, and the joy of his heart.

But in the words of my text, a tried, believing, inspired heart, is called a *golden vial*, &c. which I will attempt to explain to you in the following manner.

1st.

1st. Why called a vial.

2dly. Why a golden one, and

3dly. What the odours are.

First, A believing or faithful heart filled with odours, which are said to be the *prayers of saints*, is called a *golden vial* of prayers, to distinguish a believer's prayers from the petitions of a mere formalist, whose prayers are in his *book*, in his pocket, or else carried after him under the arm of his footman, that every body may see that the master is going to work, or to perform his irksome task. There is a difference between a praying heart and a *prayer book*; a *vial of odours*, and a pocket of papers are two things; for want of these *vials of odours* the Lord complains; *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart (there is the vial) is far from me. But in vain they do worship me*, Matt. xv. 8, 9.

The golden vials full of odours, called the prayers of saints, are intended to distinguish them from the hasty and violent devotions of an alarmed hypocrite, who moves by fits and starts, just as the fears of death or gripes of conscience rouse him. God never hears from him unless he is convulsed: *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?* Job. xxvii. 9, 10. No, in their affliction they will seek God early, Hosea v. 15. and say, *arise and save us*, Jer. ii.

27. Many vows and prayers are put up, *which is compassing their maker about with lies, or flattering with their lips, or speaking with a double heart*, Psalm xii. 2. But when his deliverance is obtained, they say, we are Lords, we will come no more nigh thee, Jer. ii. 32. We may say of such violent devotions, as we say of some people's love, it is too hot to hold. *O Ephraim what shall I do unto thee? O Judah what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away*, Hosea vi. 4.

All these prayers spring from the fear of damnation; not from any hatred to sin, love to God, or desire after holiness. *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprized the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with devouring fire, who shall dwell with everlasting burnings*, Isai. xxxii. 14.

The golden vials of odours distinguish the spiritual worship of saints from the pompous shew of devotion, which is carried on by thousands only for the sake of applause, a livelihood, or a benefice. The wolf is obliged to put on the sheep's skin, before he can sheer the sheep or get at the fleece: *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing*, Matt. vii. 15. *Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation*, Matt. xxiii. 14. But the believer has got the spirit of prayer in his heart; it lays not in his book only, as the formalists; nor in a storm, as the convulsed hypocrite

crite; nor in his mouth only, as the scribe; but all his devotions spring from the spirit, out of a tried, purified, and believing heart; prayers bottled up in this golden vial will keep as long as the believer lives, and will be acceptable to God through Christ Jesus, as long as there is a believer in the world. *Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer, Psalm xix. 14.*

2dly. A believing heart is called a *golden vial*, because of the many fiery trials that he feels: God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, *Isai. xlviii. 10.* and has promised *to purify them as silver is purified, and to try them as gold is tried, Zech. xiii. 9.* and to *make a man* by this means *more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir, Isaiah xiii. 12.* It is common in scripture to call faith, faithfulness, or the trial of faith, by this name *gold*, which is the most weighty and most valuable of all metals, and requires the greatest heat to purify it: Hence you read of *the gold becoming dim, and of the most fine gold being changed, Lam. iv. 1.* and of *the FAITHFUL city becoming an harlot, Isai. i. 21.* You read of the Saviour's being *girt about the paps with a golden girdle, Rev. i. 13.* *Faithfulness is the girdle of his reins, Isai. xi. 5.* You read of the trial of our *faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire, 1 Pet. i. 7.* And of the Saviour's counselling the Laodiceans *to buy of him gold tried that they might be rich, Rev. iii. 18.* it means, *tried faith*, God having

having chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, James ii. 5. To be short, a man whose heart is searched and tried, Rev. ii. 23. a heart purified by faith, Acts xv. ix. and fixed in humble confidence on the Lord (for it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness), is this golden vial in my text; 'tis an honest, sound, tried heart, purified by faith, and influenced by the Holy Ghost, and prayers springing from such an heart, are compared to sweet incense, in golden vials: *Let my prayer be set before thee as incense*, saith the Psalmist, Psalm cxli. 2. and such prayers are as *sweet incense*, and the Lord delights in them; *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely*, Song ii. 14. These spiritual prayers in the heart being compared to *vials of odours* is to teach us—that both the *vial* and the *odours* will keep—gold will not rust—odours will not stink—they are like a mixture of various perfumes corked up in a bottle, and we may say of this *vial of perfumes*, as the Saviour does in the parable of the bottle of wine: *But new wine must be put into new bottles and both are preserved*, Matt. ix. 17.

3dly. Saints prayers may be compared to *odours*, in allusion to the ointment made for the consecration of Aaron and his sons; *take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh, five hundred shekels; and of sweet cinnamon half as much, even two hundred and fifty shekels; and of sweet calamus, two hundred and fifty shekels; and of cassia, five hundred shekels,*

after the shekel of the sanctuary; and of oil-olive, an hin; and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, Exod. xxx. 23, 24. This olive oil, and the various spices, most sweetly prefigured the blessed unction of the Spirit of all grace. That as Aaron and his sons, and the tabernacle, were anointed therewith, so the blessed Saviour, who was anointed with the fulness of the Spirit, shed abroad a little of this perfumed unction on his church and people, which is no small pleasure to them, for it is this *ointment and perfume that rejoices the heart,* Prov. xxvii. 9. And of this the Saviour takes particular notice: *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrror and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?* Song iii. 6.

Saints prayers may be called *odours*, from the various graces that attend real prayer. The saint of God is commanded to *come with boldness to the throne of grace*. He prays to a God that he knows, and therefore *worships him* (accordingly) *in the beauty of holiness*: He comes with reverence, with filial fear, life and fervour; he *prays in the Spirit, and with the understanding also*: He asks in faith—pleads the promises—importunes and wrestles hard; he prays in hope, and in expectation of being heard and answered; concludes with submission to the will of his God, and adds watching and waiting to his petitions. He prays for himself and for others, confesses his sins, craves what he needs,

needs, and blesses God for what he has got; and *with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* There is the flame of divine love in his heart, fervent desires rise high towards heaven, and the approbation of God to such prayers is as conspicuous as it was to the *wise men's offering*, which consisted of *gold, frankincense, and myrrh*, which was approved by a vision from heaven, telling them *not to return to Herod, but to go into their own country another way*, Matt. ii. 12.

These *vials of odours* are called *the prayers of saints*; which differ much from an insensible sinner "saying his prayers," or what is commonly called "reading of prayers." The golden vial is a *new heart, a tried heart, and a believing heart*, all which are God's gifts. The spirit of grace and of supplication is a blessing promised in the covenant of grace, therefore both the vials and the odours are the gifts of God, and of God the saints receive them. All human compositions are intended by the subtlety of the Devil to set the sinner up in business for himself, that he may not be beholden to his God for the *preparations of his heart and the answer of his tongue*, Prov. xvi. 1. and as long as he can trade with human wares there is no fear of his going to God for assistance, for he is sure to be the sinner's last shift; nor will he ever go there till his stock in trade is exhausted. The fool that begun the tower at *his own expence* without *counting the cost*, went on till all his stock was expended, himself ruined,
and

and others mocking at his vain attempt, before he left off. And it is much to be feared, and this I will be bold to affirm, that God has awfully deceived me in the matter of prayer, if many thousands that are now swaddled up in a form of prayer without the spirit, will not in the great day be found calling in vain for this *oil in their lamps*, or these *odours* in the *vials*; without which the lamp will go out in a snuff, and instead of a *sweet smell* [of odours] *behold a stink*. The *vain repetitions* of the heathens are forbidden. Seek the blessed Spirit of God to help your infirmities in prayer: God loves the simple prayers of his saints; they are melody in his ears, and an odour of a sweet smell: *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*, Song ii. 14. I come now to describe a faint.

A faint is a person chosen in Christ Jesus, and in due time gathered unto him, and made partaker of his Spirit; hence you read of their being *sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints*, 1 Cor. i. 2. that is, by virtue of their union with him they have sanctification in him, and are sanctified by him, and by his Spirit *called to be saints*. They are made willing by his power, persuaded by the spirit of faith, and secretly moved by the love of God to approach and close in with Christ for life and salvation. Every real believer is a faint; for he is purified by his faith, and by faith he lives: hence you read of Saul's

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persecuting the believers, which is called *doing much evil to the saints*, Acts ix. 13. In short, a saint is a believer in Christ, who is a partaker of his Spirit, maintains a close walk and keeps up a communion and fellowship with his Lord, lives in the fear of him and in good conscience toward him; he is chosen out of the world, and separated from it; though in it, he is not of it; he is warmly attached to his Lord's cause, is diligent in the means of his appointment, orders his steps by God's word, and follows his Lord in the regeneration. Such souls the Lord hath sanctified, and such souls will ever sanctify him. May God make and keep you all of this happy number for the sake of him that came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost. Amen and Amen.

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